Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 L-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 JUSE-00 STR-04

SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 H-02 /057 W

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R 230648Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1130

INFO USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: ETRD, QA

SUBJ: ANTITRUST SUIT AGAINST BECHTEL

REF: A) STATE 297842; B) ABU DHABI 12596

1. ALTHOUGH BECHTEL DOES NOT HOLD ANY CONTRACTS IN QATAR AT PRESENT, EMBASSY BELIEVES ACTION AGAINST FIRM COULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE IMPACT HERE. LIKE ABU DHABI, WE HAVE NOTICED RESERVE ON PART OF NUMBER OF MAJOR US FIRMS TO BECOME COMMITTED IN QATAR DUE TO REAL OR IMAGINED RISKS AND GENERAL UNFAMILIARITY WITH AREA. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, SOME COMPANIES HAVE OVERCOME RELUCTANCE AND ARE COMPETING FOR MAJOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS. MOST NOTABLE EXAMPLE OF INCREASED US COMMERCIAL ACTIVTY IS NGL PROJECT. WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED INFORMALLY THAT OUT OF FIVE ENGINEERING FIRMS THAT WILL BE INVITED TO BID ON MAIN TENDER, FOUR ARE US (INCLUDING BEGHTEL). WE ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT IF BECHTEL CASE IS PURSUED, AWAKENING RESOLVE ON PART OF US COMPANIES TO DO BUSINESS HERE WILL DISAPPEAR. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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2. THUS FAR, THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO REACTION FROM GOQ OR PRIVATE SECTOR TO RECENT ANTI-BOYCOTT MEASURES FROM US. WHETHER OR NOT THESE ACTIONS WILL EVENTUALLY PROVOKE A GOQ RESPONSE THAT WILL EFFECT US BUSINESS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. IT APPEARS TO US, HOWEVER, THAT EFFECT OF BECHTEL CASE ON OTHER AMERICAN COMPANIES WOULD BE AS DAMAGING TO US COMMERCIAL INTERESTS AS ANY COUNTERMEASURES GOQ COULD IMPLEMENT. PAGANELLI

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